Utah Folk Art

Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts
Evening for Educators
February 26, 2004, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

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Overview of Utah Folk Art

Folk arts can be found in every city and town throughout the state of Utah. Traditional crafts, music, dance and stories are constantly being passed down through families, friends and neighbors or within tribal, ethnic or occupational groups. These community-based art forms are the skills we learn from each other, often from older people in our communities. They are not skills one learns in school, but are the skills one learns informally around the family dinner table, in the neighbor's garage, or by being part of a local community celebration. In terms of visual arts, there are many kinds of folk arts being practiced in our state. In some Native American communities, beadwork and basketry are still very strong. Woodcarving, whittling, rugmaking, quilting and needlework are still popular pastimes for the many Utahns who believe in using all resources, whether available materials or available time, to good use. In ranching communities people who ride horses and work with cows still make their own equipment using, rawhide, leather and horsehair while some traditional skills, like blacksmithing and stonecutting, are now primarily used to make custom craftworks. And in ethnic communities, traditional skills often associated with native lands are passed along to help the younger generations maintain their unique ethnic identities. Mexican piñatas, Japanese origami and Tongan-style quilts are just a few of the many community-based ethnic folk arts being produced in Utah today. All of these artistic skills, whether they exist in geographic, ethnic, native or occupational communities, reflect the values of earlier generations and are a vital component of community identity.

The lesson plans which follow attempt to explore a handful of the folk crafts being perpetuated within several of Utah's cultural communities. Specific examples and illustrations are drawn from the State Folk Arts Collection housed at the Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts in Salt Lake's Liberty Park. Each lesson is easily adaptable to any grade level and a number of different core curriculum standards, though within the packet not every possible grade level and subject area is highlighted for reference. As a whole the following lesson packet is particularly supportive of the Secondary Visual Arts, Art History and Criticism (7-12) core standards and objectives.

Key Elements of Utah Folk Arts

1. Folk art skills are passed down through families and communities, informally or through observation. They are not typically learned in school.

2. Folk arts are often made from locally available materials including renewable resources like willow, wood, hides or clay and from recycled materials such as rags or scraps of metal.

3. Many folk arts originated with the need to provide clothing, shelter or ornamentation in domestic, occupational or celebratory settings and consequently are often useful as well as beautiful.

4. Folk arts can change over time as forms and skills are passed down, modified and refined to meet changing needs.

5. Folk arts reflect the history, stories, customs and aesthetics of a cultural group.

6. The folk art objects in the State Folk Arts Collection may look old and are often made in historic styles, but they are all new pieces of art, crafted within the last twenty-five years and purchased from living Utah artists.

7. By looking at the folk arts being created today by the various cultural groups in Utah, one can better understand the quickly shifting demographics of our state and region. One can also see how much we all share, one with another, as these objects of traditional art illustrate our common belief in the value of maintaining, preserving and perpetuating our own cultural and artistic traditions and heritage.

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Shoshone Beaded Bag Featuring a Buffalo

Mae Parry

Mae Parry, Clearfield, Utah
Shoshone Beaded Bag Featuring a Buffalo
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #1988.16
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Mae Parry was born and raised in Washakie, an Indian farming community in northern Utah established for the survivors of the Bear River Massacre and named for a great Shoshone leader. Mae's paternal great-grandfather, Yeager Timbimboo, was one of the few survivors. Mae is known as a storyteller and for many years she has willingly shared her grandfather's story and other information about her Shoshone heritage at uncounted school and community presentations. She is also a craftswoman and like her mother, Amy Timbimboo, and her sister, Hazel Zundel, Mae carries on the family beadwork tradition. Over the years she has created a variety of beaded objects including many beaded bags that often feature plant and animal life or scenes from nature and are particularly distinctive in their design and attention to detail.

Buffalo Bag

Like pictorial art produced in any other medium, Mae Parry's "Buffalo Bag" is a visual masterpiece. The difference is that her tools are needles, thread and tiny glass beads, not a paintbrush and palette, and her canvas is tanned buckskin instead of stretched linen. Similar to the ancient art of mosaics, beadwork requires arranging different colored pieces of glass adjacent each other to form the lines and shapes of a composition. The focal point of Parry's bag is a buffalo, framed by willowy vegetation and bright flowers and accented with a smaller buffalo and two birds. To define space in different ways she uses cut beads, which reflect light, to emphasize lines like the stalks of vegetation; translucent beads, that transmit light, to create large spaces like the sky; and opaque beads, which block light, to bring the flowers and other objects to the foreground of the piece. She also juxtaposes single beads with groups or strings of beads to create texture. The buffalo hide is formed with strings of brown beads attached in various directions that emphasize the texture of the animal's wooly shoulders and differentiate between them and other parts of his body. By exploiting the properties of color and light offered by beads, Parry has produced a pictorial composition in a medium generally reserved for geometric designs and decorative images.

Native American Beadwork

Since glass beads began trickling into the American West during the middle of the 19th century, native people have used them to decorate goods and clothing with colorful and intricate designs. Utah's Utes and Shoshones are among those historically known for producing exceptional beadwork and today their work is still highly valued by Indians and non-Indians alike. While the popularity of the Intertribal pow-wow has contributed to the ongoing need for traditional beaded clothing and accessories, decorating any object with beadwork has become an accepted and a universally understood way to declare Native American identity. Today beads are commonly used to decorate everything from traditional objects, like moccasins and baby carriers, to very modern ballpoint pens, salt and pepper shakers, ball caps and athletic shoes. Over the decades beadwork designs have ranged from the oldest geometric styles to the very popular floral images and most recently, to intricate pictorial imagery like that used by Shoshone artist, Mae Parry.

Native American Buffalos

A social studies lesson plan for *Shoshone Beaded Bag featuring a Buffalo* written by Louise Nickleson

OBJECTIVES:

Social Studies—Students will research the use and meaning of buffalo to Native Americans and how the expansion of the US affected the buffalo and the tribes that depended on it. Students will demonstrate their knowledge by writing a report of their findings and making a short presentation to the class.

Art History and Aesthetics—Students will research the value of Native American artifacts, compare those works to Mae Perry's work and discuss how historical significance and innovation affect the value of art.

Art production and Art Criticism—Students will analyze and evaluate the composition of a Native American artwork. Students will demonstrate their understanding of composition by composing a landscape and rendering it in small squares of colored paper.

STATE CORE LINKS:

Social Studies, 5th Grade

Standard 2, Objective 3—Describe the impact of expansion on the American Indians; e.g., loss of land, reservations, lifestyle.

Visual Arts, 5th Grade

Making—Begin artworks by sketching basic shapes and forms
Perceiving—View artworks and talk about elements and principles
Expressing—Discuss how historical significance or innovation of materials affect the value of art
Contextualizing—Find meaning in artworks through settings and other modes of learning

SOCIAL STUDIES LESSON—Students will research the use and meaning of buffalo to Native Americans and how the expansion of the US affected the buffalo and the tribes that depended on it. Students will demonstrate their knowledge by writing a report of their findings and making a short presentation to the class.

Materials

Information about the buffalo, its meaning and uses by Native Americans in the 19th Century and about how westward expansion affected the buffalo.
One possible source:
www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/buffalo.html
information on this site taken from "The Mystic Warriors of the Plains" by Thomas E. Mails ISBN 0-7924 5663-7 The site has many links.

Activity

Show the class the reproduction of Mae Perry's beaded bag featuring a buffalo. Ask students why they think she used a buffalo to decorate a bag. Then ask the students to tell you what they know about buffalo, using leading questions as needed. Next, explain that they are going to learn more about the buffalo and the important roles it played in the lives of the Native Americans and how the westward expansion of the US affected the buffalo, and thus, the Native Americans' lives. Divide the class into small groups and assign each a specific topic to research such as the following:

- Where and how many buffalo were there before westward expansion?
- In what ways did Native Americans use the buffalo they killed?
- What methods of hunting did they use?
- What roles did the buffalo play in Native American myth?
- How did the buffalo decline as settlers moved west?
- What were the effects of the decline in numbers of buffalo on the Native American tribes?

Give the students books or other information to research. Have them find information and discuss it among themselves. Next, have the group write a short report about the information they found. Each students must write at least one line of the report. Then the groups can present their information to the class. Have the class discuss their feelings about what happened to the Native American tribes as a result of the devastation of the buffalo herds.

Felix Octavius Carr Darley, *The Buffalo Hunt*
www.lib.byu.edu/online.html

Assessment:

As a group, have students assess both their individual participation and their group effort using a simple evaluation scale.

I did not do any research _____
I did a little research _____
I did my share of research _____
I did not write a sentence for the report _____

I wrote part of a sentence or an awkward sentence _____
I wrote a sentence for the report that clearly explained one point _____
Our group report was Not very good _____ Okay _____ Awesome _____

ART PRODUCTION AND ART CRITICISM LESSON—Students will analyze and evaluate the composition of a Native American artwork. Students will demonstrate their understanding of composition by composing a landscape and rendering it in small squares of colored paper

Materials
reproduction of Beaded Bag with Buffalo
paper and pencils
colored paper
glue

Activity
Show the class the reproductions of the beaded bag and ask them to describe the scene Parry has depicted. Ask them to notice and comment on the ways she has used different kinds of beads. What kinds of effects has she gotten? What are some of the challenges and advantages of using beads instead of paint?

Ask the students to analyze the composition of the scene, using the elements and principles of art. If your class is not familiar with the principles, ask them specific questions such as the following:

- What kind of balance has the artist used? What creates the balance?
- Where can you find rhythm in the design?
- What can you say about the proportion in this work? (Natural—realistic, sky to land, buffalo to other parts, etc.)
- How has the artist created a sense of depth in the scene?
- Does the design have a center of interest and if so, what creates it?
- What gives the design a sense of unity?

When the students have analyzed the work, ask them how much care the artist put into the composition (design). The students should give reasons for their judgements. Explain to students that most artists compose their designs very carefully, even experienced artists.

Ask students to make four sketches of a scene they want to create, paying close attention to the composition. They should choose a scene that relates to Native Americans and the research the students have done or the information they have been given. Each sketch should be slightly different from the previous one so they explore several possible ideas instead of just using their first idea. Put a list of the elements and principles on the board and have students check their designs against the list, to see whether they have used the elements and principles effectively.

When students are satisfied with their design, they should plan the colors for the design, using colored pencils to indicate colored areas. Then student will color the scene by gluing small squares of colored paper on the design to simulate beads.

Assessment
Students should make a list of criteria on the board and self-evaluate their artworks according to the criteria. Then they should plan and create an exhibit of their works, including explanatory information they decide is appropriate.

ART HISTORY AND AESTHETICS LESSON—Students will research the value of Native American artifacts, compare those works to Mae Perry's work and discuss how historical significance and innovation affect the value of art.

Materials
image of the beaded bag
images of antique beaded bags (see sources)
image of the Navajo Chief's blanket(website and background information included here)

Activity
Show the class the image of the beaded bag. Tell students that they have the job of appraising this artwork (an appraiser is an expert who tells people what a specific artwork is worth. Some of the students may have seen Antiques Roadshow). Unfortunately, the owner has no information about who made the bag and when. Divide the students into small groups. Give the student groups pictures of at least two antique bags, and ask them to decide whether this particular bag is antique or not and to explain what they based their decision on.

Then show the class the image of the Navajo Chief Blanket (if possible, download and print a color picture of the blanket from the website.) or another Chief blanket such as from Utah Museum of Fine Art's web site, and give the students some background information about the blanket but do not tell them how much the blanket is worth. Ask the students to guess how much the blanket is worth. After allowing a number of guesses, tell the students what the blanket is worth. Ask them to speculate why the blanket is worth so much money. If they don't come up with the ideas that the blanket is very old and very rare, ask leading questions. Write the term Historical Significance on the board and have them say the term. Ask the students to think of other items that might have historical significance.

Cheyenne strike-a-lite bag

A nicely beaded Cheyenne strike-a-lite bag sewn with thread on brain-tan leather. The bag features metal cone drops on the top flap and on the bottom of the bag. Beadwork is a fairly tight lazy stitch done in colors light blue, dark blue, dark red, white, and yellow.

www.ddallen.com/html/item066.html
www.trocadero.com/oldndnshop/items/262879/item262879.html
//www.saeta.org/beadwork,c13744,1,ur.html
www.rivertradingpost.com/Indian%20Beadwork.htm

Ask the students what additional information they would need to appraise the bag. Then give them background information that explains the information from the background section, help the students understand that Mae Parry uses an innovative approach—she uses beads in new ways. Tie this to other artists you've studied who were innovative such as van Gogh, Picasso, Seurat, Munch, or Pollock. Ask students why they think art that has a new approach or technique is valued. (Innovation is tricky because innovative art is not always valued at the time it is produced, especially by the general public. For example, van Gogh died a pauper yet his art now sells for millions of dollars. You may want to introduce this idea or just stick with the idea that new ideas are valuable.)

Then ask the students whether Parry's work is tied to the idea of historical significance. Ask them whether the bag would be worth as much if it had been made by a white woman and why or why not? Then have them discuss whether that is logical, that items linked in some historical way, such as being made by a Native American, in a Native American tradition, are more valuable than if they were made by someone with a different ethnic background. Summarize the ideas discussed without indicating that one idea is better than another—make clear to the students that it's fine to have different ideas.

Background Information on Navajo Blanket

"Navajo blanket appraised by Don Ellis, president, Donald Ellis Gallery in Ontario, Canada.

Navajo blanket

Ted from Tucson brought an item to the ROADSHOW that, by appraiser Don Ellis' own admission, caused him to temporarily lose his breath. It was an old but more or less plain-looking Navajo blanket that Ted said he had typically just kept folded over the back of a chair. But Mr. Ellis was absolutely flabbergasted. He recognized the textile as an extremely rare piece known as a Ute First-Phase chief's wearing blanket. Dating from around 1840 to 1860, Mr. Ellis said the blanket represents one of the very first types of chief's blankets ever made. "This is Navajo weaving in its purest form," he said, calling its current condition "unbelievable." Crafted from hand-woven wool and colored with indigo dye for a Ute chief, the blanket bears a simple linear design and, Mr. Ellis explained, is so finely made it resembles silk and would repel water. Even in their own day, the blankets would have been highly valuable, he said. The owner was shocked to hear of his blanket's significance and Mr. Ellis was at pains to emphasize just how important and extraordinary a work of art it actually is. "Sir, you have a national treasure," he told Ted. Possibly adding to the blanket's current value is the fact that Ted says the blanket originally came into his family as a gift to his grandmother's foster father from a legendary figure of the American West, Kit Carson. Leaving aside that bit of possible provenance, Mr. Ellis appraised the blanket at between $350,000 and $500,000 — to date, the largest appraisal ever given on ANTIQUES ROADSHOW."
www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/roadshow/series/highlights/2002/tucson/tucson.html

Sources for beaded bag images

www.ddallen.com/html/item066.html
www.trocadero.com/oldndnshop/items/262879/item262879.html
www.saeta.org/beadwork,c13744,1,ur.html
www.rivertradingpost.com/Indian%20Beadwork.htm

Ute First-Phase chief's Wearing Blanket
www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/roadshow/series/highlights/2002/tucson/tucson.html

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Buckaroo-Style Saddle

Bob Ray, Parowan, Utah
Buckaroo-Style Saddle
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, # 1997.13
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Bob Ray

Bob Ray is a self-taught saddlemaker who learned by taking saddles apart. His apprenticeship began when he and his wife, Carolyn, worked on a ranch where one of his jobs was repairing horse gear. Today the Rays work in their own shop where they produce some of the region's most sought after saddles and tack. Bob is known for crafting buckaroo style saddles, inspired by the Mexican *vaquero* tradition, decorated with elaborately carved floral designs. A few years ago he also taught himself to make custom saddle trees, a long process that results in a foundation of just the right size, weight and flexibility. The Rays' saddles, trees, chaps and leather accessories are not only enjoyed by riders throughout the region, but have also been included in a number of regional craft exhibits.

Buckaroo-Style Saddle

A well-built saddle is a comfortable tool for both rider and horse. Yet contemporary saddlemakers know that building a great saddle requires more than technical skill and hard work. It requires merging the world of utility with the world of beauty, a task that takes talent and inspiration, knowledge and experience. Bob Ray's buckaroo-style saddle succeeds in this pursuit. Like all saddles, his is build from the saddletree upwards using successive layers of carefully shaped leather to craft a comfortably deep seat, a large sturdy horn, skirts to protect the horse's back and sides, stirrups to support the rider's feet and tapaderos to shield his legs. But Bob Ray's artistry becomes truly visible in the treatment of the surface leather and particularly through the tooling techniques used to give the leather texture, pattern and design. Working while the leather is damp, he uses a series of carving tools, or knives, to carve flowers that cover the entire surface of the saddle. With petals and stems carved at varying depths, each individual flower adds an almost three-dimensional texture to the surface. And when taken together, the repeated shapes of the juxtaposed flowers create an all-over pattern, contributing to the surface decoration and the design of the saddle as a whole.

Hide work
Cowhide, whether raw or tanned into leather, offers a unique artistic medium. Rawhide, as the name implies, has been cleaned of all fat and hair and can be stiff, unwieldy and sometimes brittle. Damp rawhide is customarily used to cover the wooden skeleton of saddletrees and stirrups so when the hide shrinks and dries, molding tightly to the wood, it makes the tree or stirrups stronger. Rawhide can also be used for trim on saddles, but mostly it is cut into long narrow strings that are braided into reins, quirts (whips), hobbles (to keep horses from running away) or hackamores, bosals and headstalls (horse head gear). Leather, on the other hand, is rawhide that has been tanned by applying either organic or synthetic chemicals whose enzymes transform the hard hide into soft, pliable material. Leather can be stamped or tooled to give it a different surface texture or it can be dyed to provide a contrasting color. In addition to saddles, Utah's occupational artists also make chaps, canteen covers, saddlebags, rifle covers and other ranch gear from leather.

Saddles and Textures

A lesson plan for *Buckaroo-Style Saddle* written by Louise Nickleson

OBJECTIVES:
Social Studies—Students will identify evidence of Hispanic influence on the development on the West.
Visual Arts, **Aesthetics**—Students will explore an aesthetic puzzle that examines the issues of whether useful items can be art, and whether having an institution include the item in an exhibit makes an item art.
Art Production, Art Criticism, and Art History—Students will demonstrate their understanding of texture by making texture rubbings of actual textured items and by reproducing the texture of an item in a drawing (implied texture). Students will compare real and implied texture and identify reasons for using each. Students will look at examples of real and implied texture and how different artists have used each. Students will determine which media are most likely to use real or implied texture.

STATE CORE—Social Studies: Standard 2–Students trace the development and expansion of the United States through the 19th century.
Standard 4–Students analyze the contributions of key individuals and groups on the development of the New World and the United States.
Visual Arts—Lesson covers all four standards: Making, Perceiving, Expressing, Contextualizing

SOCIAL STUDIES LESSON—Students will identify evidence of Hispanic influence on the development on the West.

Materials
image of saddle by Bob Ray

Activity

Show the class the image of the saddle and give the students information about Bob Ray and saddle making. Point out the Hispanic influence on the design of the saddle and ask the students to name other Hispanic influences on western culture. You can make a list on the board of influences such as food, words, religion, architecture, art, crafts, music, etc. Tell or give the students information to read about influences they may not be familiar with such as specific crops such as tomatoes and chilies from Mexico and wheat, apples, pears, peaches, cantaloupe, watermelon, and grapes from Europe. They also introduced livestock to the West: chickens, sheep, goats, pigs, horses, oxen, and burros. In addition, Hispanics introduced timber cutting, mining, manufacturing of leather goods, and ranching. http://www.cabq.gov/aes/s3hisp.html

The traditional Southwestern "squash blossom" necklace is a copy of the pomegranate flower, which the Moors introduced to Spain, and which was frequently depicted on saddles.

This exercise can be the activity or can lead to a social studies lesson on the Spanish Trail or Spanish American War, or can be followed by research into specific influences from a historical perspective. The introductory activity can also be part of a lesson comparing Mexico and the US.

ART PRODUCTION, ART CRITICISM, AND ART HISTORY LESSON—Students will demonstrate their understanding of texture by making texture rubbings of actual textured items and by reproducing the texture of an item in a drawing (implied texture). Students will compare real and implied texture and identify reasons for using each. Students will look at examples of real and implied texture and how different artists have used each. Students will determine which media are most likely to use real or implied texture.

Background Information on Texture

Texture can be implied, when the artwork looks like it has texture as in a watercolor painting, or it can have actual texture that you could feel if you could touch the item, such as on this saddle. Artists use both real and implied texture to create interest and variety, to simulate reality, to create shapes and values. This activity helps students learn the difference between real and implied texture and helps give them skills for using texture in their artworks.

Materials
paper
crayons with the paper removes
drawing pencils, preferably at least three different hardnesses
items with texture
Postcards of artworks with real and implied texture

Buckaroo-Style Saddle
example of real texture

Examples of Real:
From this packet
Bob Ray, Buckaroo-Style Saddle
Mae Parry, Shoshone Beaded Bag Featuring a Buffalo
Guillermo Colemenero, Day of the Dead Altar
Roger Chamberlain, Whittled Wagon, Team and Oxen
Peggy Rock Black, "Placing the Stars" Basket
Ferl Blackburn, Hooked Rug
Jeff Freeze, Hitched Horsehair Bosal

From SMA poster and postcard sets and sma.nebo.edu
Mahonri Young, Factory Worker
Raymond Jonas, Abstract Configuration
Liz Davis, The Guest

James Christensen, *Rhino*
example of implied texture

Examples of Implied:
From SMA poster and postcard sets and sma.nebo.edu
Calvin Fletcher, Washday in Brigham City
James Christensen, The Rhinoceros
Edith Roberson, Channel Three
Mabel Frazer, North Rim of the Grand Canyon
Robert Marshall, Snow Canyon
Carel Brest van Kempen, Lizard Relay
All SMA artworks also available at sma.nebo.edu
Carol Harding, Symbols of the Orient
Wayne Kimball, Bearded Man with a Headache This Big

Activity
Give the students paper and crayons that have had the paper removed so they can use the sides. Have them find items with real texture such as brick, leaves, concrete, lace, etc. Ask the students to feel the texture and then to make a rubbing of the texture. They should find at least 5 different textures. Have the students compare the rubbings with the texture on the saddle. What makes the paper appear to have texture?

Divide the students into groups and give each group a postcard of an artwork with real texture and one with implied texture. Have students discuss the differences between the two kinds of texture—since both artworks are shown in photographs, the differences won't be as obvious, but have them refer to their experiences making texture rubbings. Ask them to identify reasons

artists might use real or implied texture. Have students share the reasons they identified with the class.

As a class or as groups, look at examples of real and implied texture by various artists and have the students identify which media are most likely to use each.

Assign students to bring in some item that has strong texture. The item can be man-made or natural, and you will probably want to have a few items you have brought. Not everyone needs an item for the assignment but they do need to be able to see an item well.

Give the students paper and pencils and have them draw a representation of the texture on a half sheet of drawing paper. The texture drawing should fill the whole page. Students should keep the texture rubbings and their texture drawing in their art folder for future reference, so they can better incorporate texture into their artworks.

Assessment
Use the following as formative assessment. Have students use the list as a checklist: Students cannot go on to the next step until they can indicate they have completed each step.

I felt 5 different textures _____
I made rubbings of 5 different textures _____
My rubbings were carefully done and reproduced the texture of the items _____
I brought an item to draw _____
My drawing filled the whole page of paper _____
My drawing looks like the texture of the item I drew _____
I have put the drawing and rubbing in my art file _____

Real texture is texture you can _ _ _ _ and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ texture is created to look like real texture.

AESTHETICS LESSON—Students will explore an aesthetic puzzle that examines the issues of whether useful items can be art, and whether having an institution include the item in an exhibit makes an item art. (What is Art? Institutional theory of art)

Materials
5-6 copies of the postcard of the saddle by Bob Ray
Or, give each group a different postcard of one of the items from the packet and change the scenario to reflect the variety of items

Activity
Divide the students into groups of six or more students, and number the students in each group, either one, two, or three. Give each group a copy of the postcard of the saddle and set the scenario for them:

A family has been given the saddle in the photograph. It's undoubtedly a very fine saddle, but the family members are arguing among themselves. Some family members say the saddle is very nice, but since it was made to be used, it's not art. The other family members say that useful items can be art and that the design and workmanship of the saddle is of such high quality that the sad-

dle qualifies as a work of art. To support their position, they refer to the fact that the saddle was part of a recent exhibit at an art museum, saying that since it was exhibited in an art museum, it must be art.

The family has brought the saddle to an art expert, and asked the expert to tell them which group is right. Tell the students that all ones are art experts, all twos take the position that useful items cannot be art, and all threes take the position that practical items can be art and that if an object has been exhibited in a museum, it is art.

Give the students about 15 minutes to discuss their positions, then ask the groups to come to an agreement on one position and to justify that position with specific reasons. Then give each group a chance to present their position and defense to the class. Tally the positions on the board. Ask what the differing results tells the class about people's ideas about what art is and whether an institution like a museum determines whether something is art. Hopefully, the students will come to the conclusion that people have different ideas and that's okay. If not, you may want to use leading questions to help bring them to that conclusion.

Assessment

Create a rubric listing the criteria for the group work and ask students to rate themselves according to their performance in the group and to have the group rate them as well.

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Day of the Dead Figure

Guillermo Colemenero

Guillermo Colemenero, Salt Lake City, Utah
Day of the Dead Figure
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #2003.2
Photo by Herridge & Associates

As a young boy in the central Mexico state of Chihuahua, Guillermo Colmenero grew up making toys from soap or clay, molding or carving figures and other objects t replicate the world around him. His childhood was also filled with stories about the warriors and gods of the ancient Mayan and Aztec civilizations as well as family stories about the Mexican Revolution. After studying sculpture in school, he soon discovered that he could translate many the experiences of his childhood into artistic creations that express his own family and cultural heritage. Among those art forms are his Day of the Dead sculptures that truly succeed at visually expressing this heritage while embodying both community values and his own personal beliefs.

Day of the Dead Figure

Guillermo Colemenero's Day of the Dead sculpture provides a great illustration of this symbol-rich artistic tradition. He has sculpted a woman, depicted in skeleton form, who symbolizes not only death, but much more. She is dressed in typical clothing and is energetically striding forward, balancing a basket on her head. Her colorful blue dress is of traditional design and decoration, embellished with flowers and other bright accents. A multi-colored scarf cushions the basket on her head. She wears red lipstick, low hanging earrings and a necklace, and her hair is carefully coiffed. She even wears sunglasses to protect her eyes! The contrast between her skeleton face, hands and feet and her colorful and careful grooming is jarring. Yet this sculpture is not designed to terrorize. Rather, as we watch her go about the everyday business of transporting goods from one place to another, we are reminded that below our skin we are all skeletons, reminding us to accept and move beyond the fact that eventually everyone dies, and live each day to its fullest.

Day of the Dead Sculptures
Blending religious practices from the Aztec and Spanish cultures, Mexico's Day of the Dead celebration typically includes musical processions to the cemetery, the decoration of graves and home altars with flowers and photographs, the telling of stories and eating of special foods -- all in memory of and to honor loved ones who have died. Skeletons, skulls and other symbols of death abound, often sculpted by local craftspeople. In some regions they are made at local bakeries from sugar and are decorated with children's names, just like American's sometimes decorate chocolate Easter Eggs. Other sculptures are carved from wood, molded out of clay or fashioned from whatever materials are on hand. Whether displayed on home altars or on the gravesites of loved ones, these sculptures remind everyone that although death is inevitable, we can still live and celebrate each day to its fullest.

Day of the Dead

A lesson plan for *Day of the Dead Altar* written by Diana Bass

Content Objectives:

A. Students will research a famous Mexican writer, artist, musician, etc. Students will create a talk-show in which the artist discusses his/her life and works.
B. Students will celebrate and reenact rituals from Day of the Dead celebrations.
C. Students will write and create pictures for pop-up books on Day of the Dead celebrations.
D. Students will compare Day of the Dead practices with they ways that other cultures pay respect to their deceased.
E. Students will learn Spanish words for concepts connected to the Day of the Dead.
F. Students will visit a cemetery and make inferences based on information contained on headstones.
G. Students will design a tombstone in which they bury a bad habit or human condition (hunger, suffering, war, etc.). In addition, students will dedicate a memory to a loved one, soldier, or other person who has passed away.
H. Students will make salt dough sculptures to put around their altars.

STATE CORE LINKS:
Social Studies, 5th Grade
Standard 4
Students analyze the contributions of key individuals and groups on the development of the New World and the United States.
Standard 8
Students compare the cultures of Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Fine Art, 5th Grade
Standard 3
The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.
Standard 4
The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning

Skill Objectives:

A. Fine Motor Skills
B. Intra and Interpersonal skills
C. Creativity
D. Critical Reasoning and Comparisons

Activities and Assessments:

1. Using class time or as homework, students will research a famous Mexican artist. They will develop ten questions for a talk-show host (teacher or a student who is nominated for the position) to ask the artist during the talk show. Students should bring samples of the artist's work to share during the talk show.

2. Working with a cooking class or parents, have students bake *pan de los muertos* (bread of the dead). See recipe below. Have students put plastic toys in the bread. The goal is to get the bread with the toy prize. You might have a cook off where students bring in tamales, moles, chiles, and enchiladas.

3. Using a Venn diagram or writing dual poems, students will compare Day of the Dead practices with those of a country outside the United States.

4. A Spanish speaker will use interactive games like Bingo to teach related to the Day of the Dead. The person might teach words such as: flowers, offering, candies, oranges, skeleton, culture, sugar canes

5. On a field trip or as homework, students visit a cemetery and make inferences about: social class, religious beliefs, health, standard of living and more as they read the information on various headstones.

6. Students will make a headstone and altar out of papier maché for a deceased loved one, soldier in an army, or other person they deem important to recognize. They will place artifacts and sculptures around the headstone that represent the person and his/her life contributions. In addition, they will write the bad habits or human conditions they would like to see buried.

Pan de los Muertos (bread of the dead)

1 package active dry yeast ~ 1/3 cup warm water
(110 degrees) ~ 1 cup butter
1/4 cup granulated sugar ~ 1/2 teaspoon salt
~ 3 Cups all purpose flour
1 tablespoon water ~ 1 teaspoon crushed aniseed
1/2 finely shredded orange peel ~ 3 eggs ~
1 egg yolk ~ 1 egg white ~ 2 teaspoons water
granulated sugar to sprinkle

Soften yeast in 1/4 cup water; set aside. In mixer bowl cream butter, 1/4 cup sugar and salt. Blend in 1/2 cup of the flour, water, aniseed and orange peel. Add eggs and egg yolk; beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Blend in yeast mixture and 1 cup of the remaining flour; beat 3 minutes at high speed. By hand stir in remaining 1 1/2 cups flour. Cover; refrigerate 4 hours.

Turn onto lightly floured surface. Remove 1/4 of the dough and set aside. Shape remainder into a ball. Place on greased baking sheet; flatten to a 6" round.

Divide reserved piece of dough into 4 portions. Roll two pieces into two 7" ropes to form "crossbones." Combine egg white and 2 teaspoons water. Place crossbones in an X atop loaf, attaching with some of egg white mixture.

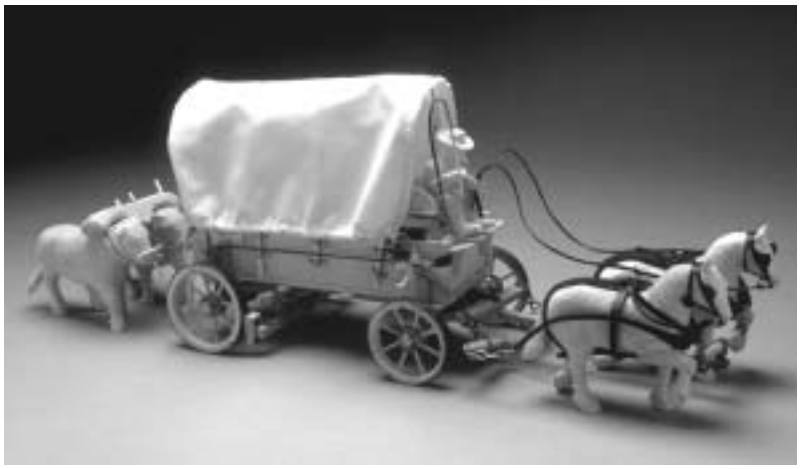
Roll one of the remaining portions into a 2" ball of dough in depression, attaching with egg white. Cut the last piece of dough into 4 portions; shape each into a teardrop and secure onto sides of loaf with egg white.

Cover and let rise in warm place 30 to 40 minutes or till nearly double. Bake in 325 degrees oven for 35 to 40 minutes or till done. Remove to rack. Brush hot loaf with remaining egg white mixture; Brush hot loaf with remaining egg white mixture; sprinkle with sugar. Repeat brushing and sprinkling after 5 minutes. Makes 1 loaf.

Utah Folk Art

Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts
Evening for Educators
February 26, 2004, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Whittled Wagon, Team and Oxen



Roger Chamberlain, Glendale, Utah
Whittled Wagon, Team and Oxen
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #2000.7
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Roger Chamberlain

When Roger Chamberlain was a kid, he made his own toys. With his pocketknife he turned branches of willow into whistles, wood scraps from local sawmills into small trucks and a piece of soft gypsum into a miniature heart. He even remembers making toy animals out of clay. Maybe that's because carving runs in Roger's family. One of his great grandfathers, Asmus Jorgensen, was a gravestone carver while another, Isaac Carling, was a carpenter who is remembered for building wagons and sculpting wooden oxen for baptismal fonts. Several of Roger's aunts, uncles, cousins and children also carve. Though he's always made rocking horses and other toys for his family, lately Roger has begun using his pocketknife and chisels to create both three-dimensional and relief carvings of people, animals and wagons.

Whittled Wagon, Team and Oxen

Using only a whittling knife and soft pine, Roger Chamberlain sculpted this three-dimensional, triangular diorama that features a miniature team and wagon, with driver and oxen. Though he didn't use modeling clay to be cast into bronze or a hammer and chisel to cut and shape stone, he used the same techniques employed by sculptors working in any medium. He cut away or carved some of the wood to release the forms of horses, oxen, wheels and a human figure from the small blocks of wood and he modeled or built up forms from smaller wooden pieces to fabricate the bed of the wagon and it's mechanisms. Then Chamberlain added strips of leather to make harnesses and reins, a string rope to lead the oxen, a fabric cover for the wagon box and bits of metal to replicate old-time blacksmith work, adding darker colors and different textures for contrast and visual interest. Like the chains and fans also whittled with pocketknives from pieces of wood, this realistic sculpture not only suggests movement but actually does move. While its rounded wheels, stepping horses and a driver frozen mid-action suggest the forward motion of the wagon, both the wagon wheels and the tongue actually do turn, a result of Chamberlain's concern with authentically reproducing a functioning undercarriage mechanism like the ones he rode in as a boy.

Whittling
Whittling is an age-old pastime found in cultures throughout the world wherever forests grow and wood is readily available. In theory, anything can be whittled from the right piece of wood, but surprisingly the same kinds of pieces seem to be made almost everywhere. Miniature people, animals and equipment are common but the most popular items people whittle are chains. Chains come in all forms with links of every imaginable shape from round or oval to square or rectangular. After mastering chains some whittlers take on the challenge of whittling something inside the chain. Simple balls are most common though some whittle letters or small figures, animals or other objects and some even place the links in a special sequence so they tell a story. Miniature pliers and tools with movable parts, elaborately decorated spoons, letter openers and other utensils as well as fans, created by slicing soft wood with the grain and carefully spreading out the ribs, are all part of the whittling tradition.

Learning about Our State from the "Folks" that Live Here

A Social Studies lesson plan
written by Megan Hallett

Objectives:
By closely examining Folk Art pieces from the Chase Museum of Folk Art students can gain a better understanding of Utah's past and present history, culture, and geography. By investigating the artists, art form, and materials of each piece of art:

- Students will study the sequence of changes in the evolution of various forms of Folk Art from around the State
- Students will learn about different geographical characteristics of regions of the state and how these influence the art and artists within that region
- Students will identify different population characteristics of each region
- Students will trace the emergence of various cultural groups within the state
- Students will examine the ways in which different cultures have influenced each other's art traditions
- Students will discuss the ways in which their own region of the state might influence the things that they make

State Core Links
Grade 4 Social Studies- Standards 1,2,4

Materials
Reproductions of Folk Art from the Chase Museum
Magnifying Glasses
Samples of everyday materials that have been used in the different art traditions-paper, wood, baskets, rags, horsehair or assorted tack
Pictures of geography around the state- mountains, desert, the Great Salt Lake. . .
Map of Utah
Map Pins

Discussion

The Chase Home of Utah Folk Art is divided into four different galleries, Ethnic arts, Native American Gallery, Occupational Gallery, and the Rural Gallery. All of these galleries contain art that was made by residents of Utah, some from families that have been here for many generations, some that have come to Utah just recently. We will see objects that are like things we have at home or that we ourselves have made before or we have seen someone in our family make. And we will probably look at some art that is something new for us.

By looking at these different pieces of art that come from our state we can learn something about the people who live here, the lives and traditions that are important to them, the natural materials that they find in the places where they live, and even the kinds of jobs that they have. Let's begin by taking a look at a piece from each of the galleries and reading about how the Chase museum decides where to put the pieces.

Day of the Dead Figure

"The Ethnic Arts Gallery features traditional art from a number of Utah's national, ethnic and immigrant communities. Displays range from Japanese origami, Chinese paper cuts and Mexican paper flowers and piñatas to Polynesian quilts, Swedish weaving and a variety of objects made from clay and wood. Objects are typically crafted for use at community celebrations or to decorate the home, reinforcing ethnic heritage and identity." - from the Chase Museum Website

Placing the Stars Basket

"The Native American Gallery contains objects made by members of Utah's resident tribes, Goshute, Navajo, Paiute, Shoshone and Ute, and by American Indians from out-of-state tribes who live in Utah. The gallery features beautiful beadwork, basketry, musical instruments, toys and rugs regularly made by Utah artists for use within their communities or for sale to collectors." - from the Chase Museum Website

Hitched Horsehair Bosal

"Stonecarving, hand-forged tools and horseshoes, saddles and cowboy gear made from braided rawhide and hitched horsehair are featured in the Occupational Gallery. Artists have learned these traditional skills from family members or co-workers and they produce objects that are functional, beautiful and very much like the work that has been produced by traditional craftsmen for centuries." - from the Chase Museum Website

Whittled Wagon, Team and Oxen

"The Rural Gallery features traditional art that reflects the challenging nature of rural culture and its concern with being productive, recycling useful materials and efficiently using all available time and resources. Braided, loomed, hooked and crocheted rugs, whittling and woodcarving, furniture made from local willow or pine and carved or welded miniature wagons are on display. Typically used to furnish and decorate one's home, they demonstrate the age-old need to produce objects of usefulness as well as beauty." - from the Chase Museum Website

Activities

Part 1-Investigation and Examination in Small Groups

1. Divide class into four different groups and distribute a postcard of a piece of folk art to each of

the groups
2. Hand out a magnifying glass to each group and explain that this is a museum worker's tool, and will allow them to gather information about their piece of art
3. Ask each group to work together as a team of detectives to closely examine their piece and make some guesses about it. Encourage them to guess and remind them that there are no right and wrong answers here, you are just gathering information.

4. Have them record to the best of their ability the answers to these questions:
    a. What is the piece? Prompting questions- Is it a painting or sculpture? Does it have a use? Is there anything like it in your home?
    b. What does it appear to be made out of?
    c. Where do you find those materials? Prompting questions- Do you find materials like that inside or outside? Do you have that in your home or is it something special that you buy? If you find the material outside can you find it anywhere or only in a special place?
    d. How was the piece made? Prompting questions- Was it put together by hand or with special tools? Carved, woven, tied, pounded?
    e. What do you think the piece is used for, if anything? Prompting questions- Does it look like it is just a decoration? If so have you seen something like it before? What clues make you think it might have a special use or an everyday use?

Part 2- The second portion of the project is a group discussion about one of the pieces from the Chase Home in which the teacher and the students work together to discover ways in which the form of folk art or the particular artist is tied to a particular sense of place. This will be done with the help of the student's initial conjecture about their pieces, and by guided questioning. I will use "Whittled Wagon, Team and Oxen" as a example.

1. Ask the class group that examined this reproduction to tell you what they discovered about the Roger Chamberlain piece.

2. Ask for agreement or disagreement from the class and see if anyone else has something to add.

3. Give them some background information on the artist. "When Roger Chamberlain was a kid, he made his own toys. With his pocketknife he turned branches of willow into whistles, wood scraps from local sawmills into small trucks and a piece of soft gypsum into a miniature heart. . .One of his great grandfathers, Asmus Jorgensen, was a gravestone carver while another, Isaac Carling, was a carpenter who is remembered for building wagons and sculpting wooden oxen for baptismal fonts"

4. From this little information alone we can learn many things about Roger Chamberlain that also tell us about our state.
- Resourcefulness or possibly pioneer spirit- making own toys
- Materials used-willow and gypsum (have students look up gypsum)
- Occupations that utilize carving
- Family history of carving

5. Give them some background information on this particular piece. "Using only a whittling knife and soft pine, Roger Chamberlain sculpted this three dimensional, triangular diorama that features a miniature team and wagon, with a driver and oxen. . .While its rounded wheels, stepping horses and a driver frozen mid –action suggest the forward motion of the wagon, both the wagon wheels and the tongue actually do turn, a result of Chamberlain's concern with authentically reproducing

a functioning undercarriage mechanism like the ones he rode in as a boy."
6. From this information we learn some specifics about the piece that tie it to Utah history.
- Using simple tools and materials
- History of homesteading in the state
- Transportation used by settlers in the state
- The artist himself rode in a real carriage just like this one as a child

7. Give the class some background information on this folk art tradition. "Whittling is an age old pastime found in cultures throughout the world wherever forests grow and wood is readily available. . .miniature pliers and tools with movable parts, elaborately decorated spoons, letter openers and other utensils as wells as fans, created by slicing soft wood with the grain and carefully spreading out the ribs are all part of the whittling tradition."

8. From this information we learn some specifics about whittling.
- It is a folk art done in Utah that has a world-wide tradition.
- Although we don't think of Utah as forested, there are still sources of soft wood readily available. Where do we see a lot of trees in Utah?
- Ask who in the class has whittled or seen someone whittle.

Part 3- The third portion of the Folk Art Project would be to have the groups reform and prepare a report on their particular piece for the class. Ask them to investigate these aspects of the art piece:

- Where in the State was this piece made? (use map pins to indicate where each groups piece is from.) Is this a folk art tradition from inside Utah or did it come from somewhere else?
- When was this piece made? Are pieces like it still being made today? How might they be changing in terms of subject matter or materials?
- How: Discuss the materials that are used and where they come from. Discuss the subject matter and how it relates to Utah, or how it relates to the culture that made it here in Utah.
- Why: Discuss why you think it is important to the artist to make this piece.

Discuss why it is important to keep a folk art tradition alive in our state.
Students should have one week to work on their group project. They should be encouraged to find other examples of the folk art tradition, or bring in materials that the class can see and touch. They should also be given an opportunity to look at the state of Utah government website to find more regional information of the counties or towns that their folk art piece comes from.

Assessment

Did students engage in the examination of the folk art reproductions?
Did students describe what was represented in the piece?
Did students engage in the discussion about "Whittled Wagon with Team and Oxen"?
Did students cover the where, when, how, and why of their folk art piece in their presentations ?
Did students bring additional resource materials for the class to see and handle?
Did the students find resources outside of the classroom to broaden their coverage of the topic?

Extensions

Fine Art- A logical step after each student presentation would be a hands-on activity regarding that folk art tradition such as whittling soap, decorating sugar skulls, making a recycled rug or a

basket.

Utah Folk Art

Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts
Evening for Educators
February 26, 2004, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

"From Horses to Jets" Paper Cut

Ada Rigby, Blanding, Utah
"From Horses to Jets" Paper Cut
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #1990.2
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Ada Rigby

Although the art of papercutting is found in cultures worldwide, rural Utah is not where one expects to find it. But when a group of exiled Mormon polygamists from Colonia Juarez returned to live in Blanding, one of the young women brought this art form to town. Having learned papercutting while in Mexico, Lelia Palmer taught the basics to young Ada Rigby. Since then, Ada has shared this skill with many in Blanding, and it has become one of the area's most cherished traditional arts. Over the years Ada has created hundreds of intricate paper designs, cutting them free hand with scissors, producing patterns of her own creation. Her work depicts her own family, community and life experiences through recognizable landscapes, buildings, people and activities. Ada also sews, makes quilts and does other needlework.

“From Horses to Jets” paper cut

The beauty of this piece lies in its complicated manipulation of space. While cutting away sections of paper Ada simultaneously shapes images with the paper she leaves intact and creates other images defined by the outline of the paper she has removed. Working with these positive and negative spaces, she juxtaposes shapes to build contrasting textures, fashions lines of repeating images to provide rhythm and movement, and executes realistic images that offer detail and contrast. The composition is based on an autobiographical narrative that builds from the bottom upwards chronicling the history of Ada’s home region, San Juan county. The earliest historic residents, Navajo and Ute Indians, are depicted along the bottom with the arrival of the 19th century pioneers on the next layer. Images of settlement — windmills, children playing, churches and schools — follow and the entire piece is embellished and accented with local land forms, animals and vegetation that add texture and design. Along the top, a series of lines fan out like rays of the setting sun, opening up the narrative both visually and allegorically to encompass not only jets, but everything the future may bring.

Paper Art
For centuries paper has been folded, shaped, shredded, drawn on and cut to create beautiful pieces of art. The art of cutting designs out of a two-dimensional piece of paper, manipulating the positive and negative space to create balance and design, is practiced in many cultures from Asia to Central America to Europe. During Victorian times, paper cutting became very popular in America and cutting out silhouetted figures, facial profiles and graphic designs by hand become quite common. Perhaps the most frequent use of this art form was in the creation of hand-cut valentines that often featured images of significance to the sender or the receiver. Ada Rigby continues this tradition, often building her paper cut designs from carefully selected images, each representing a specific location, a person or an object that is important in her life. Through her work she creates symbols of place and heritage that offer a visual representation of her life not unlike the facial profiles produced by artists a hundred years ago.

Trimming Away the Excess to Reveal the Story

A language Arts lesson plan for *"From Horses to Jets" Paper Cut* written by Megan Hallett

Objective:
By closely examining the paper cut and discussing the art of paper cutting as used for personal narrative, students will develop a process for choosing vital elements of their personal narrative, literally editing or "cutting away" the non-essential, and laying out their story as a visual representation.

1. Students will examine the issues of personal narrative as a subject in written and visual arts.
2. Students will discuss the process of choosing a topic, placing temporal and content constraints on a topic, and organizing the content in an effective manner.
3. Students will use a visual exercise to narrow down the scope of their narrative and dis cover the vital elements of their story. They will edit each other's work.
4. Through hands-on exercises students will transfer written content into visual content.
5. Students will discuss the different ways in which the important elements of their chosen personal narrative contrast with the non-essential aspects of the story; and how to manipulate content of either visual or written material to emphasize this contrast.
6. Students will examine the results of the process and discuss the effect this procedure might have on future writing projects.

State Core Standards
Grades 7-12- Language Arts, Standards 3,9,10,11
Grades 7-12- Fine Arts-drawing, Standards 2,3,4
Grades 7-12- Fine Arts- Art History, Standards 1,2,4

Materials
Several Sheets of writing paper
Pens
Pencils
Several sheets of black construction paper

Vellum or tracing paper, cut into 8 1/2 X 11 inch sheets
White colored pencils
Black colored pencils
Craft Knives or scissors

Discussion

1. Show the students the paper cut, "From Horses to Jets" by Ada Rigby. Provide some background information regarding the diverse international history of traditional paper cutting.

- Paper has been used as a material for folk art around the world ever since paper was invented in China in 105 A.D. The nature of its beginnings and the anonymity of its practice have caused paper cutting to be ignored as an art form, though artists and collectors are becoming more aware of preserving this valuable folk heritage. Worldwide traditions include German scherenschnitte, Polish wycinaki, Chinese hua yang, Japanese kirigami or mon-kiri, French silhouettes, Matisses's paper cutouts, and Mexican papel picado.
- The folk art tradition that was taught to Ada Rigby was brought to Blanding, Utah by Mormons who had been living in Mexico.
- Papel Picado means "perforated paper" and refers to traditional decorative paper banners used for Mexican festivals. Designs typically include human and animal figures, flowers, geometric designs and words. When the banners are made for Day of the Dead festivals, skeletons are depicted engaging in everyday activities.

2. Have the students examine Rigby's paper cut in light of this information and discuss what similarities they see in terms of traditional subject matter and decoration.

3. Ask: How many people are in "From Horses to Jets"? Are there animals depicted? Trees and flowers? Buildings or homes? Is there anything that appears to be just decoration or is everything a part of the scene?

4. Ask: By considering the title and closely examining the work what can we conclude about Rigby's subject matter? Is she depicting one memory or a series of memories? Does she appear to be very familiar with the scenes she is depicting or is the memory vague?

5. Looking at the arrangement of the scenes within the paper cut, discuss with the students what kind of time appears present in the piece. Is this a depiction of a single day or many years?

6. As preparation for the activity, discuss parallels between what Rigby has depicted as her memory of a time in her life and a specific place, and what the students might use as subject matter for their personal narratives.

Activity

The activity will consist of three parts with the third part having two different options for the students to choose based on their interests. Each step in the process should take at least an hour to give students plenty of time to give quality consideration to the task.

Part 1: The first step of the process is a creative writing exercise that allows the students to develop their own personal narrative content. Some guidelines should be provided for the student's consideration in order to help them focus. Since you are using Ada Rigby's piece as a refer-

ence ask the student's to draw parallels between her subject matter and their individual experience. In a 1-2 page essay written in pencil (so it does not show through later as the vellum is layered), the students should give a descriptive account describing their present life situation. Each of the essays should include information about these aspects of their lives:

- Describe the home that you live in. Things to consider: Is it an apartment or a house, a farm, or a duplex? Is it close to other homes or does it have a lot of space around it? What is the surrounding neighborhood like? Lots of traffic or is it very quiet? Do you like it or dis like it? Why?
- Describe the people who live in your home with you. Things to consider: How many people? Are they there all the time or away a lot? Is your home noisy inside or quiet? What are the other members of your household doing when they are at home? Cooking, cleaning, talking, or watching television?
- Describe the personal space that you have inside your home. Things to consider: Do you have your own room or share with someone else? Is your space messy or clean? What is important to you about your space?
- Describe an activity or activities that you do to help with your household. Things to consider: Do you have chores to do at home? Do you help with cooking and cleaning? Do you baby-sit siblings or run errands?
- Describe an activity or activities that you do for fun or entertainment in your household. Things to consider: Do you play with brother and sisters? Inside or outside? Do you paint or draw, listen to music, watch television, play video games, or talk with your parents?

Part 2: Part two of the project is an editing process and serves as a transitional bridge between the verbal portion of the project and the visual portion. This is also the step in which the students have an opportunity to collaborate with each other and get peer comments on their work.

- Give the students a sheet of vellum or tracing paper and a black colored pencil. Using a piece of tape each student will attach the piece of tracing paper at the top edge of their essay pages and trade their paper with one of their classmates.
- Each student will read the paper before them through once.
- For the editing portion the students will choose the most important words or phrases in each section of the essay they are reading. The purpose here is to locate the appropriate words to emphasis while at the same time retaining content. For example, if the paper has a sentence describing an apartment with details about paint color, a pool, and objects on balconies, the reader might highlight apartment building and plants. Or if there is a detailed sentence about watching television, the reader might just highlight the word television.
- The purpose for the editor is to highlight the vital aspects of the essay, to choose the fewest amount of words that they think will still tell the author's narrative.
- As the editor chooses words, they trace over the word on the top layer of the vellum.
- The top sheet of vellum will act as tool for extracting the vital elements of the narrative.

Part 3: The purpose of this portion of the project is to allow students to complete the process of transforming their written narrative into a visual one. Present both options to the students and let them decide which best fits their skills and exploratory interests.

- Option one- give students white colored pencils and black construction paper and give them the assignment to illustrate their edited personal narrative, representing the high lighted words that their peers have chosen from their original essay. Encourage them to

consider the way that these scenes or objects from their narrative are arranged on the page and how this might affect their story.

- Option two- Have students experiment with actual paper cutting, first laying out their design and then using craft knives or scissors to remove sections of the paper.

Assessment

Did students engage in the discussion regarding Ada Rigby's paper cut?
Did students describe what was represented in the piece?
Did students draw parallels between what Rigby depicts in her memories and what they would depict in theirs?
Did students address the five elements that they needed to in order to establish a sense of place in their narrative essay?
Did students engage in the activity of editing one another's work?
Did students produce a visual representation of their narrative?

Final Discussion

- Ask the students to examine the way that this process would influence the decisions they made regarding their initial personal narrative.
- Was the editing process helpful? Did their peers choose the words of emphasis that they themselves would have chosen, or did they feel that the middle step eliminated too much of their content?
- How similar is their final visual presentation to their initial essay? Are they more satisfied with their essay or with their drawing or paper cut?
- Ask them to imagine reversing the process and moving from a visual representation to a written one. How might their story be altered?
- Ask for other projects that they might employ to create personal narratives that involved both a writing component and an art component.

Paper Cut Resources

www.art.unt.edu/ntieva/news/

Jablonski,Ramona The Paper Cut-Out Design Book. Owing Mills, Maryland: Stemmer House Publishers, 1976

Utah Folk Art

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"Placing the Stars" Navajo Story Basket

Peggy Black, Monument Valley, Utah
"Placing the Stars" Navajo Story Basket
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #1995.5
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Peggy Rock Black

The Anasazi Indians, sometimes called "the ancient ones," left behind many drawings, or rock art, on sandstone walls and cliffs throughout the Southwest. Many rock art panels feature kokopelli, the hunched back flute player, and his form is one that weaver Peggy Black really likes. Like her sisters, Peggy Rock Black learned to weave both rigs and baskets when she was a little girl by watching her mother at work. After she had made several small rugs, she tried making baskets and decided that basketweaving was the art form she liked. Until she married, Peggy only made traditional ceremonial baskets. Today many of her baskets, like this one, have elements of the ceremonial design but feature figures or designs borrowed from nature, books or other Native American traditions.

"Placing the Stars" Basket

Before telling Navajo myths, it is important to remember that these stories are only told during the winter, between the first real frost and the first thaw, when the snakes are hibernating and cannot be disturbed by the stories. This story basket tells about when First Man decided to give the people light at night by placing pieces of rock-star mica that would glow in the sky. After he had created the North Star and carefully designed and built several other star constellations, his work was interrupted by Coyote, the trickster. Coyote, who wanted to help but lacked First Man's patience, stole the bag of mica rock, placed three red stars in the sky for himself and then scattered the rest of the mica. He created the profusion of random stars we now see in the nighttime sky and call the Milky Way that is a reminder of Coyote's impatience. Weaver Peggy Rock Black divided this basket into two parts that represent the opposing forces of night and day, and of good and evil. It is interesting to think about how Coyote's misdeeds balanced First Man's good deeds and restored balance or hozo.

Native American Basketry

Basketry is perhaps the most ancient of all the visual arts, produced for thousands of years in cultures around the world. People discovered very early how to gather vegetation and then twist or weave it into useable forms. Today, two ancient basketry traditions, one utilitarian and the other ceremonial and decorative, survive among the American Indian groups whose homelands lie within Utah. Goshute weavers create unadorned yet elegant baskets to gather and process pine nuts or

choke cherries or to carry and protect infants, and Navajo weavers still make ancient jug-shaped baskets to carry water. Ute Mountain Ute and Navajo basket weavers make tray-shaped ceremonial baskets with the distinctive bands of red and black known as the wedding basket design and Navajo artist weave a more decorative version called story baskets.

Placing the Stars

A lesson plan for "*Placing the Stars" Basket*
written by Diana Bass

Content Objectives:

A. Students will tap into prior knowledge, things they want to know, and things they learn about the Anasazi Indians.
B. Students will analyze the components of various Navajo myths
C. Students will work with vegetation in order to make a useable product.
D. Students will understand the process of basket weaving after watching a demonstration from an art teacher or guest artist.
E. Students will display what they have learned in art cases throughout the school.

STATE CORE LINKS:

Social Studies, 5th Grade
Standard 2, Objective 3—Describe the impact of expansion on the American Indians; e.g., loss of land, reservations, lifestyle.

Visual Arts, 5th Grade
Standard 1
The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes.
Standard 3
The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.
Standard 4
The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning.

Skill Objectives:

A. Critical Inquiry
B. Collaboration
C. Ingenuity
D. Dramatization

Activities and Assessments

1. Using a K-W-L chart, students will write everything they know about the Anasazi Indians and Native American legends in partnerships of two. Students will then write what they want to know about these topics.

2. Using the Internet, students will research the things that they put in the "Want to Know" column of the K-W-L chart. They will write what they learn in the "L" column.

3. Students will "walk about" the classroom adding things that other partnerships discovered that they did not (add to the L column),

4. Have the students read some Navajo Legends (see below for some examples). To analyze Navajo Legends, students can choose one of the following tasks:
   A. Tell the story with string (weave the string into designs that follow the course of the legend).

   B. Paint a mural that classmates can view and know the story without reading or hearing a word.

   C. Record the legend on tape. Use sound effects, voice inflections, and more!

5. Have a guest speaker come to talk to the students, you can find a list of guest speakers and artists in residence on the Utah Arts Council website: http://arts.utah.gov/
   Students will generate questions for a guest speaker on basket making. The questions will be written before the day of the speaker's appearance. The speaker will demonstrate how a simple basket is made and answer student questions. Students will write thank you cards to the guest speaker and indicate what they learned from the experience in the card.

6. Students will visit a Nature Center (Murray District has one) or work on the school grounds collecting vegetation. Working in partnerships of two, students will create a functional product. They could make baskets, utensils, decorations for the classroom, boxes, and more! Display their products in cases throughout the school. Don't forget to take pictures as they work!

More Navajo Myths
from http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/nav/omni/omni04.htm

THE STICK RACE

It was at this time that they first played the game of the kicking of the stick. The people of the canyon came to play against the mesa people. The mesa people cleared a track on which they were to hold the stick races.There were eight men from the mesa and eight men from the canyons; young men, and good runners all. Each team had four sticks, about a finger-length long and rubbed very smooth, which they kicked. There was always heavy betting. They bet arrows, corn, pottery, turquoise, shell and stone beads, arrow points, and, in fact, everything they owned. First the runners were barefoot; but one cheated and got the stick between his toes and kept running. After that the runners had to wear sandals. The soles of these sandals were of woven yucca fiber and the tops were of buckskin. They covered the soles with a kind of pitch. These running sandals were the first moccasins.

THE STORY OF TSE'NAGA'HAI, THE ROLLING ROCK

Elder Brother asked his mother and grandmother where the big Rolling Rock could be found. They said: "It can be found at a place called Betchil gai, the Shining Rock. But the Rolling Rock is dangerous. It runs after a person and rolls over him. It is very dangerous." But the Elder Brother said: "There is no such place as dangerous on the earth."

He gathered together all his knives and started out for the Shining Rock. When he came near it he took out his black knives and crossed them and planted them. A little farther on he planted the two blue knives, crosswise. On beyond he planted the two yellow knives, also crosswise. The last to be planted were the two knives with the serrated edges. These, also, he planted crosswise. He came out now in sight of the Rolling Rock. The Rock started for him; and he ran and jumped over the serrated knives. When the great Rock rolled over them a huge piece of it broke away. The Elder Brother jumped over the yellow knives, and when the Rock rolled over them again a big piece broke away. He jumped over the blue knives, and the Rock rolled after him, and another piece broke off. He jumped over the black knives, and when the Rock rolled over them there was only a little piece of it left, and it had very little life in it.

The Elder Brother chased this remaining piece of the Rock westward into the San Juan River. He got a piece of the rock that had been broken off the Rolling Rock and he sat down and told it that the thoughts of the great Rolling Rock had left it and would never again enter it. "The tribe called the Dîné will use you," he said. "They will use you for flint to strike fire from."

The Elder Brother carried the small piece of the Rolling Rock to his home. He left it outside and entered the hogan. He said: "Mother, Grandmother, Grandfather, I have killed the great Rolling Rock." They all answered: "No one has the power to kill the great Rolling Rock." The Elder Brother said: "But you can find a piece of it outside." So First Woman went out and taking up the stone she danced around four times, saying: "It was because of this that I was made to live alone."

THE STORY OF TSE'YEINTI'LI, THE ROCKS THAT CRUSH

Now although the Swallow People were the last of the Great Ills, still there were other dreadful beings that destroyed humans on the earth. Way back in time there was a piece of rock brought up from the underworld; and people were told that at times rocks would hurt them. There was a place called Tse'a haildehe', a narrow place between two cliffs, where, if one started to step over it, it widened or drew apart, and then returned to its first position crushing the person who had fallen into the crevice. This place was beyond Salt Canyon near the head of a canyon having many cracks in the rocks.

The time the Elder Brother went there, there was a distance of about 2 feet between the cliffs. He made as though to step across, but the opposite cliff drew away. When he took a step backward the cliffs drew together. This happened four times. He then placed the Giant Elk's horn across it and it remained in place. He carried a piece of this cliff rock to his home; but before leaving he commanded the cliffs to stay in place and never to move again.

PRAYER STICKS

One time the chief medicine woman, or her successor, looked at the Calendar Stone and told them what she had seen. She said that the people were to have prayer sticks. She showed them how

they should be "dressed". She said the people must use them when they prayed. They should use them when they prayed for rain; they should plant them near springs and in their corn fields. Prayer sticks should be used with the sacred corn pollen. They were both holy.

WEAVING

After the medicine woman told the people about the prayersticks she told them that there was a place in the underworld where two rivers crossed. It was called ni tqin'kae tsosi, fine fiber cotton (Indian hemp). There were two persons who brought the seed of that plant, they were spiders. They said that the people were to use the plant instead of skins for their clothing. So this seed was planted in the earth.

When the seeds were planted, the plant ripe, and the cotton gathered, the people shaped a little wheel, 3 or 4 inches in diameter, and they put a slender stick through it. This was used in the spinning of cotton. When they began spinning they pushed away from the body toward the knee. Then the chief medicine woman said: "You must spin towards your person, as you wish to have the beautiful goods come to you; do not spin away from you." For it was in their minds to make cloth which they could trade for shell and turquoise beads and she know their thoughts. She said: "You must spin towards you, or the beautiful goods will depart from you."

There were two names given to the spindle, yudi yilt ya'hote, meaning, turning or shooting around with the beautiful goods. This the Spider Man suggested; but his wife said: "It shall be called by another name, ntl is yilt ya'hote, turning with the mixed chips."

After they had spun the thread they rolled it into good-sized balls. They brought straight poles and laid them down; one down, one opposite. They tied two other poles at the ends, making a rectangular frame. They rolled or wound the thread on two of the poles as the sun travels, east to West, over and under the poles. The Spider Man said that the ball of thread should be called, yudi yilt nasmas agha, rolling with the beautiful goods. His wife said: "No, it shall be called ntsli yilt nasmas agha, rolling with the mixed chips."

After the loom was finished the cross poles were erected and other poles placed on the ground to hold the loom frame solidly, and the loom was stretched and lifted into place. Then the Spider Man said: "It shall be called yata ilth na dai'di, raising with the beautiful goods." His wife said: "It shall be called nil tliz na dai'di, raising with the mixed chips."

There is a notched stick running across, with a notch holding every other thread. The Spider Man said: "It will be called yote biltz nes thon, looping with the beautiful goods." His wife said: "From henceforth it shall be called nil tliz biltz nes thon, looping with mixed chips." Then they used a narrow stick about two and a half feet long, and they wound the yarn or thread over it, and where there is no design they ran it along. That was given the same name as the ball of thread. The Spider Man held that it should have the same name as the ball; but his wife said: "No, it shall be called nil tliz nasmas agha."

Then they used the wide flat stick for tapping down the thread. The Spider Man said: "It shall be called nil tliz na'ygolte"; but his wife said: "It shall be called nil tliz na'ygolte, twining with the mixed chips". When they got this far with the weaving, the threads of the warp mixed together and were too near or too far apart. So another kind of stick was used. It had long, narrow teeth. It was also used for the purpose of tapping down the thread. The Spider Man said: "It shall be

called yote yo'golte, hoeing with the beautiful goods." His wife said: "It shall be called nil iltz yo'-golte."

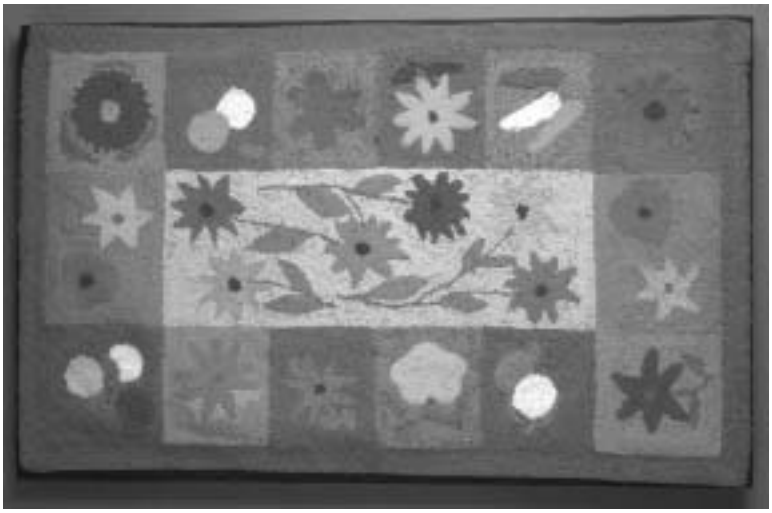
The Spider Man said: "Now you know all that I have named for you. It is yours to work with and to use following your own wishes. But from now on when a baby girl is born to your tribe you shall go and find a spider web which is woven at the mouth of some hole; you must take it and rub it on the baby's hand and arm. Thus, when she grows up she will weave, and her fingers and arms will not tire from the weaving." To this day that is done to all baby girls.

The weaving progressed, and they made all kinds of articles. They used cotton and yucca fiber and Indian hemp. These were the thread. They raised turkeys, and they used the feathers for feather blankets. They ate the turkey flesh for their meat. They killed rabbits and cut the fur into strips, and they made fur blankets. They wove different kinds of grass into mats for their floors, and also, to hang in front of the openings of their houses. There were many kinds of weaving. The people lived peacefully and were happy in working out designs in the new art. They raised great quantities of corn. All this made them grow in number; they became a very strong people and their past troubles were forgotten; but this was not to last.

Utah Folk Art

Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts
Evening for Educators
February 26, 2004, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Hooked Rug



Ferl Blackburn, St. George, Utah
Hooked Rug
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #1990.13
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Ferl Blackburn

Ferl Blackburn believed that people are happier when they are busy, especially busy doing something creative. Born in Orderville where his parents were part of the Mormon experiment in communal living, this attitude seemed to be his inheritance. Ferl learned to garden from his mother and cultivated both vegetables and flowers all of his life. While on a Mormon mission, he learned to hook rugs by watching two New England crafts workers. Later he made rugs using polyester, a nonabsorbent, indestructible material that he said was "useless for anything else." Ferl created his own designs, sketched them onto burlap and then hooked strips of polyester, one at a time, to fill in the designs. Not surprisingly, his rugs usually featured vegetables and flowers, illustrated in brilliant colors.

Hooked Rug

Ferl Blackburn was raised in rural southern Utah, working in the fields and orchards and playing among the flowers in his mother's gardens. Over the years he tended his own flower and vegetable gardens, ultimately translating his experiences with the land into the characteristically vibrant colors and designs of his unique hooked rugs. Much of the visual richness is this rug is a result of the vivid, highly saturated hues inherent in his choice of material, recycled polyester fabric, and in the profusion of dark reds, rusts, oranges and yellows that comprise his palette. But the structure of the rug and the way colors and shapes are juxtaposed against each other also add to the abundance of color. Blackburn's rug is built upon a lighter, rectangular field in the center, flanked by a series of darker square fields in alternating colors. Each field is filled, almost to bursting, with an organic shape inspired by a flower, fruit or vegetable. These shapes are created in colors just as intense in value as the background field adding substance and texture to the piece. Finally the complementary green leaves and stems and the occasional blue shape, both accent and provide balance to the warm colors that predominate. This cornucopia of vibrant color, bold shape and saturated space results in a feeling of completeness and unity as rich as the harvest colors that predominate.

Rag Rugs
From frontier times until the end of the Second World War, homemade rag rugs were used in most homes. Rugs were braided, hooked, crocheted or woven and in many towns a part-time rug maker, with a mail-order loom, supplied all local needs. Many contemporary Utahns grew up helping gather, clean, sort and prepare rags to make rugs and share a mindset with their ancestors about the value of recycling available resources into useful objects. For this reason, there are still a surprising number of rug makers throughout the state who spend much time and energy crafting beautiful rugs in an age when they are readily available and can be purchased at minimal cost. In addition to the joy of making something beautiful by hand, that heritage is the motivation behind the colorful creations of hooked rug maker Ferl Blackburn and many other folk artists throughout the state.

Salvaging Heritage: The Lost Art

Recycled objects in folk traditions, Ferl Blackburn, and his hooked rug

A lesson plan for *Hooked Rug*
written by Nina Richards

Objectives:

Students will:
- Become familiar with the process of rag rug making by weaving a "bag rug" of their own.
- Hand make novelty papers using recycled and collected materials.

Students will understand:
- The hidden aesthetic and practical value of ordinary household objects.
- The lost art of reviving and transforming the old into the new.
- That folk art reflects the environment of the artist.
- The joy of making something by hand.
- That in the past, Utahns passed the time doing handcrafts.
- The need to perpetuate our cultural traditions.
- The nature of folk art:
  - -made from locally available, renewable and recyclable materials.
  - -originates in need.
  - -modified through time.
  - -passed down orally and procedurally, as opposed to through more formal or institutional means.
  - -always reflects the history, stories, customs and aesthetics of a cultural group.

STATE CORE LINKS:
- The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning.
- The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.
- The student will analyze, reflect on, and apply the structures of art.
- The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes.

Materials:

Bag Rug
Rectangular pieces of cardboard (a little bit bigger than the size of the rug you want to make)
Scissors
Yard sticks
Pencils
Wide ribbons (preferably used)
Plastic grocery bags

Handmade Paper
Used paper of all sorts (Newspaper works well.)
Blender
Dish pans or wash tubs
Window screens
Picture frames the size of window screens
Sponges
Thick wool blankets or felt
Old sheet
Paints and brushes (optional)
Leaves and petals (optional)

Readings
Joseph Had a Little Overcoat. Taback, Simms.
MarketDay: A Story Told with Folk Art. Ehlert, Lois.

Activities

Introduction:

1. Allow students to independently explore hooked rug piece.
2. Divide class into groups and assign each group a discussion question. Questions might include:
   "Why did Ferl Blackburn make this rug?"
   "What is this rug made out of?"
   "Where did Ferl Blackburn learn how to make this rug?"
   "Does this rug belong in a museum or in a house?"
   "What is this rug trying to show?"
3. Reassemble and have each group present their question and thoughts. (Art History and Criticism.)
4. Read *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat* or *Market Day: A Story Told with Folk art*, taking time to ask students how elements from their discussion questions tie into the themes in the book.

Bag Rug:

1. Create a loom by cutting notches along the top and bottom ends of the cardboard to hold the ribbon you'll wrap around it.

2. Place cardboard on the floor in front of you so that it's vertical with the long sides running up and down. Use the ruler to draw a line across the cardboard, 1.5 inches below the top edge. Make a mark every 1.5 inches along the line you just drew.
3. At each mark, cut a notch as wide as your thumb from the edge of the cardboard to the line.
4. Use the notches as guides for wrapping the ribbon around the front and back of the loom. When you've wrapped the ribbon all the way across the cardboard, tie the ends together on one of the sides. Your loom is now ready for weaving.
5. Snip the handles on all of the bags, then cut down the sides of each bag to the bottom seam.
6. Tie the ends of the bags together to make "yarn".
7. Tie one end of the yarn to the ribbon at the top corner of the loom, then weave the rest of the yarn over and under the ribbon, all the way around the loom. Weave each row in an opposite pattern from the row above it.
8. Scrunch the rows of yarn toward the top of the loom after finishing each row, so the rug won't have any gaps in it. Continue weaving the yarn around the loom until you reach the bottom. Tie the yarn to the last ribbon on the side of the loom.
9. Cut the ribbon across the top edge of the loom. Slide the cardboard out from the center of the rug, then tie the ends of the ribbon together in pairs. Cut the ribbon at the bottom of the rug, and tie the ends in pairs. Try out your new rug!

Handmade Paper:

1. Rip the paper into small pieces. The smaller the pieces, the easier it will be for your blender to process the pulp. Place all of the pieces into the blender until it's three-quarters full. Fill the blender with water almost to the top.
2. Hold the lid on the blender while you press the pulse button on and off. The water and paper will mix into a thick pulp.
3. Fill the dish pan halfway to the top with water, then pour blender loads of pulp into the dish pan until it's three-quarters full.
4. Hold the frame on top of the screen and dip them together into the pulp. Shake the screen gently back and forth to spread the pulp evenly over the surface of the screen. Keep the screen and the frame level so the paper will have an even thickness.
5. Use your hand or a sponge to press some of the extra water out of the pulp on the mold. When the water has dripped out of the pulp, remove the frame and set it aside.
6. Quickly and steadily flip over the screen onto the blanket or piece of felt. Press against the back of the screen with your fingers or a sponge to release the paper to the fabric.
7. Place the sheet over the fresh paper and press to get more of the water out of the pulp. Flip over the fabric, paper, and sheet sandwich so the sheet is on the bottom, and carefully peel the fabric from the paper. Place the sheet with the fresh paper on it in a safe place to dry.
8. Optional: Add petals and leaves to the mix for a unique touch. Or have the youth paint a picture of a landscape on the paper once it is dry.

Note: Bag Rug and Handmade Paper activities cited from: Earth Friendly Crafts for Kids. Smith, Heather and Rhatigan, Joe. 2002.

Assessment

After the activities, students will create a small paragraph to accompany each of their pieces of folk art explaining the following in their own words:
-How these pieces were made and what they are made from (Production).

-How they learned to make these pieces (Production).
-What they thought about while making their pieces (Aesthetics and production).
-What makes their pieces their own.
-How their piece will function.

Sources

Earth Friendly Crafts for Kids. Smith, Heather and Rhatigan, Joe. 2002.
Utah State Core Curriculum.
Joseph Had a Little Overcoat. Taback, Simms.
Market Day: A Story Told with Folk Art. Ehlert, Lois.

Variations

Read *Market Day* with more mature students.
Read *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat* with younger students.

Utah Folk Art

Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts
Evening for Educators
February 26, 2004, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Hitched Horsehair Bosal

Jeff Freeze, Snowville, Utah
Hitched Horsehair Bosal
Utah State Folk Arts Collection, #1996.8
Photo by Herridge & Associates

Jeff Freeze

Like many kids, Jeff Freeze wanted to be a cowboy. But the difference between him and most everyone else is that he never outgrew it! Having grown up on a farm in Brigham City, he knew how to ride, and with that as his only qualification, he talked his way into a job on a Nevada ranch in the 70s and has worked as a cowboy ever since. Leatherwork was another childhood interest and Jeff taught himself to braid both leather and rawhide. A few years ago he added horsehair hitching to his evening activities after finding an old manuscript on the subject. Now he spends days working across the state line at the Gambel Ranch in Montello and evenings hitching horsehair bosals, quirts and other tack that he sells through western stores or trades with his buckaroo co-workers.

Hitched Horsehair Basal

A colorful geometric design decorates the noseband of Jeff Freeze's beautiful rawhide bosal. Made from long strands of horse hair using a technique known as hitching, this design adds pattern and color to a piece of gear that might otherwise blend into the background. A bosal, once reins are attached, allows a rider to gently guide his horse without use of a mouth bit. Freeze has created a symmetrical design along the rounded edge of this bosal that grows from the center to the sides, decorating the section that prominently rests just above the horse's nose. Like most hitched horsehair, the design is composed of a series of diagonal lines executed in contrasting colors that converge into diamond shaped forms. The long, stiff strands of horsehair, harvested from the mane or tail, naturally lend themselves to these linear forms. Though Freeze's design is built upon a highly contrasting combination of yellow and orange against brown, all of the colors are earth tones, resulting in a harmonious blending of color against the natural yellowish-tan of the braided rawhide form. Whether laying on a flat surface or being worn by a horse with the rounded knot hanging under the chin, this gracefully shaped handmade object is balanced and symmetrical and its hitched horsehair decoration mimics and reinforces both of those qualities.

Horsehair Hitching
Hitching is a braiding technique that relies on twisting and weaving fibers together to build or add decoration to an object. Working in such as small scale is painstaking and very time consuming, qualities that typify all aspects of this art form. First, hair from the mane or tail of a horse must be gathered, cleaned, sometimes dyed and then arranged so all strands are laying in the same direction. Then it can be twisted together to form riatas (ropes) or headstalls (bridles) or individual strands can be hitched together, one at a time, into intricate decorative patterns to accent bosals, headstalls and spur straps. Horsehair ranges from white to black with shades of brown and gray in between, but the use of brightly colored hair is becoming increasingly common among contemporary hitchers. Today everything from rawhide reins and quirts to leather belts and checkbook covers are being embellished with designs made by talented, patient artists who enjoy the challenge of working in unusual materials, creating beautiful geometric designs.

Let's Make a Basket

A lesson plan for *Hitched Horsehair Bosal* written by Vicki Gehring

Objective:
Students will learn about folk art, a brief history of how the discovery of string made weaving possible and the artistic aspects of weaving by folk artists. They will explore the textural quality of woven items. Then create a small basket using string and yarn.

Standards:
Making: explore a variety of art materials while learning new techniques and processes
Perceiving: recognize an element in art and use it in a personal work of art
Contextualizing: applying visual arts to culture, history, and all learning

Materials:
Examples of woven art, a 3-4 foot length of sisal or 1/4 inch string for each student, several different colors and/or kinds of yarn (fine or loosely woven), very large sewing needles (the point doesn't need to be sharp).

Teacher Preparation:
Find some images or examples of woven rugs, baskets, macramé, or other examples of woven folk art, including the picture of Jeff Freeze's Hitched Horsehair Bosal in this packet. Pictures of horsehair and other woven baskets can be found on http://www.hoelsindianshop.com. Some real examples are preferable so students can experience the texture.

Lesson:
*20-30,000 years ago early man developed the first string by twisting together handfuls of plant fibers. Preparing thin bundles of plant material and stretching them out while twisting them together produced a fine string or thread. The ability to produce string and thread was the starting place for the development of weaving, spinning and sewing.

*"It is generally believed that weaving techniques were first used in basketry where plant fibers such as thin vines and reeds were readily available as basket making materials."
Academic American Encyclopedia, Grolier Incorporated, Danbury, Connecticut, 1983, p. 83.

Discuss some different kinds of fiber (i.e. plant fibers such as cotton, linen, tree barks, palm leaves, and animal fibers such as silk and horse hair, etc., also man-made fibers such as nylon and polyester).

Ask: Can you name some things we make out of these fibers? Which of the things we have named are things that have been woven or sewed or spun? When we talk about texture what do we mean? Which of the fibers we have discussed would have a rough texture? Which would have a soft texture?

Show and discuss: pictures or examples of woven art including the picture of Jeff Freeze's horse-hair Bosal. This is made out of horsehair. What kind of texture do you think it has?

Discuss: When people use fibers to weave things like fabric, rugs and baskets (name some of the other things the students have named). Why do you think they like to create patterns and/or pictures?

Read: Folk art is a self-taught form of art that is original or clever and unique (different) in concept. What does it mean to be self-taught? What is unique about these bosals made by Jeff Freeze? (The fact that they are woven or that they have a design on them?)

Ask these aesthetic questions:
Do you think we can consider weaving an art? Does it need to have a design on it to be considered art? What is the difference between an art and a craft? Do you think they go together?

Craft:
Skill or ability in something, especially in handwork or the arts (i.e. proficiency, expertness).
"*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language," Houghton Mifflin Co, Boston, MA, 1980.*

Project:
The students will have a weaving experience by using the string, yarn, and large needles to create a small basket.

1. Let the students choose the yarn they want to use. They will need approximately 12 feet (it can be an assortment of different lengths and colors).
2. Give each student 3 or 4 feet of string (younger students should only get 3 feet).
3. If possible, each student should have a large sewing needle.
4. Demonstrate how the basket is to be made. (See instructions).

Conclusion:
Read the following:
"Weaving is about our lives; a sacred gift given by the Holy Ones to give us something for our hands to do, something for the eye to see and something for the mind to hold."
-Navajo Weaver

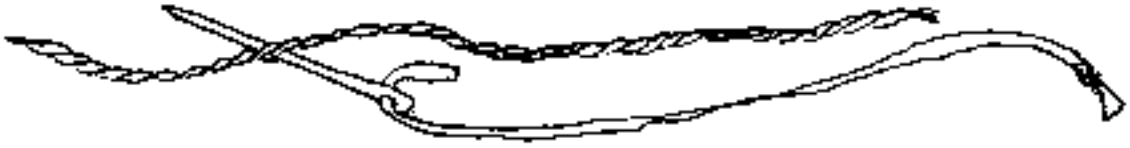
Discuss with the students their experience with making the baskets:

What part was the hardest? The most fun?
Did the design turn out the way you wanted it to?
Did the shape of the basket turn out the way you wanted it to?
Do you like the way it turned out?
What about the texture; is the basket texture different than that of the yarn? Is it different from the texture of the string?
How did combining the yarn and the string to make a basket change the texture?
Is it fun to work with materials that have texture?
Do you agree with the Navajo Weaver about his statement on weaving?

Display the baskets with a written statement by each student about their basket or their experience with making it.

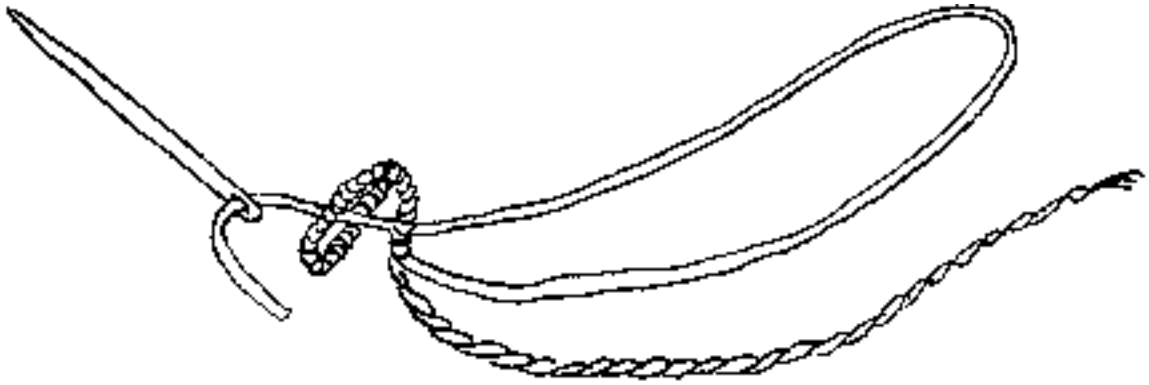
Basket Weaving Instructions

1. To start the basket, thread some yarn in a needle. Stick the needle through the string about 1 inch from one of the ends. Pull the needle and the yarn through the string until you get to the other end of the yarn, which can be knotted with a small knot.



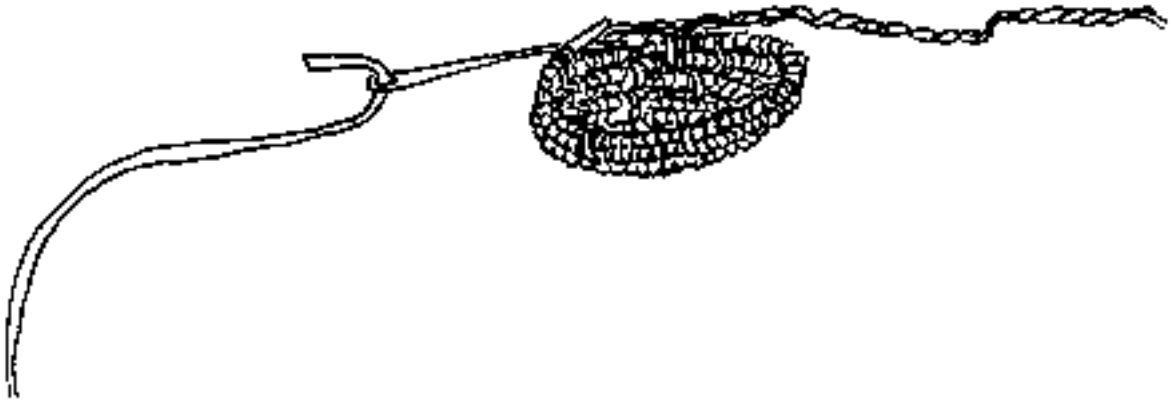
2. Wrap the yarn around the string toward the end that is 1 inch away. Then fold the wrapped string in half and secure the loop by threading the yarn back through the string close to where it was started.

3. Now start wrapping the yarn around the string in the other direction. Wrap either 8 or 10 times depending on how tight or loose you want to weave the basket. After the string has been wrapped the appropriate number of times, take the needle and thread the yarn through the loop, pulling the wrapped string close to the loop.



4. This process will be repeated, except that as the wrapped string moves away from the starting loop, it will be attached to the part of the wrapped string just next to it. It is important at this time to think about the shape of the basket. When the basket sides need to start going up, the wrapped string should be attached on top of the string next to it instead of on the side of it.

5. When the yarn gets short, or a different yarn is wanted, thread it through the string, cut it off with a little to spare, and start a new piece of yarn by threading it through the string. However, this time don't knot the end of the yarn, just make sure not to pull it all the way through and leave a small amount that can be held against the string. Then wrap over that end, and the end of the yarn that was previously being used.



6. Repeat the wrapping and attaching process until the string is almost used up. At this point, the string will be laid next to the wrapped string and the needle will be used to wrap the yarn around two layers until the end of the string is covered with yarn. Then use the needle to back thread the yarn under the wrapped string and cut off the excess.